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UNCLAS DJIBOUTI 000713

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PREL](#) [EFIN](#) [DJ](#) [LY](#)

SUBJECT: LIBYAN SANCTIONS: DJIBOUTIAN COMPANY REQUESTS  
RELEASE OF ASSETS

REF: SECSTATE 95015

1. (U) This is an action message.

2. (U) Following the announcement ending most commercial sanctions against Libya, the Banque Indosuez Mer Rouge branch located in Djibouti sent Embassy Djibouti a letter requesting assistance, on behalf of SVAMC SARL DJIBOUTI, in recovering assets frozen by Citibank New York under ILSA. The assets frozen were \$74,000 USD in payment for the purchase by the Libyan Embassy in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia of four Suzuki vehicles from SVAMC SARL DJIBOUTI. Embassy requests Department's assistance in resolving this long-standing issue.

3. (U) Following is a brief outline of key dates in the SVAMC SARL DJIBOUTI case:  
--September 18, 2001: Libyan Embassy in Ethiopia purchases four Suzuki vehicles from SVAMC SARL DJIBOUTI for a total of \$74,000 USD.  
--November 19, 2001: Gianni Rizzo, owner of SVAMC SARL, asks Banque Indosuez Mer Rouge (BCIMR) to inquire into the delay in payment for the Suzuki purchase.  
--December 4, 2001: Commercial Bank of Ethiopia informs BCIMR that the request was made to transfer funds to the SVAMC SARL account at Citibank New York, however the funds transfer had been blocked due to sanctions against Libya.  
--March 5, 2002: BCIMR requests Embassy assistance in resolving the issue of blocked funds.  
--March 6, 2002: SVAMC SARL DJIBOUTI files application to OFAC for a release of funds.  
--May 6, 2002: Department of Treasury sends notification of receipt of SVAMC SARL's request to release funds.  
--May 20, 2002: BCIMR requests Embassy assistance a second time to intervene due to SVAMC SARL's decision to bring the matter to the Djiboutian Courts. (It is unclear what, if any, Embassy action was taken at that time.)  
--May 3, 2004: BCIMR again requests Embassy's assistance in unblocking funds transfer for the SVAMC SARL transaction.

4. (U) Embassy has made available in its consular section information and guidance provided reftel. We believe lifting of the embargo may make possible completion of the transaction herein described. Post can provide copies of documentation received, if required.  
RAGSDALE